



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

The Future of the UUFW Newsletter

By Florence Ferguson, Editor

Four years ago, the UUFW Newsletter became a two-page weekly instead of the previous 12-15 page monthly. At the time, our administrative assistant, Marilyn Nash, was also sending out the weekly reminders email blast and had taken on the additional duties of entering data into our new church management software.

I volunteered to take over the newsletter if we could make it shorter and more frequently published. We envisioned the two-tracks—newsletter and weekly reminders email— as getting information out in a more timely and easier to absorb way without having to scroll through page after page. The weekly email blast has focused on upcoming events while the newsletter has covered news about things that have happened, including photos as often as possible. The newsletter has also been the place to provide news about members, introduce new members and share information about community events of interest to UUs.

My favorite part of the newsletter has been the forum for members, friends and the minister to share stories, reflections and wisdom in the form of a feature article/column. We have some wonderful writers in our Fellowship, and it is my hope that the feature articles have helped us get to know each other better in some small way.

Still, it's always a good idea to pause and assess how well our communication efforts are serving us. In addition to the newsletter and blast, we also have a FaceBook page and website with information. At a recent meeting with Rev.

Paul, Savannah Fersner, Marilyn Nash and Stephen Maxwell, we considered all of these information sources and whether it would make sense to combine the newsletter and the weekly blast.

The reminders blast is a feature of our church management software, which does not accommodate photos and other visual media. Thus, we would need to create a second email data base if we used another communication software. And articles of any length would result in lots of scrolling. We decided to stay with the current formats and make more of an effort to connect the communication vehicles using links.

As the newsletter enters year five, I am hopeful there will continue to be enough content for four issues most months. Sometimes there just isn't enough. But you can help make sure the newsletter has interesting and diverse content each week. Here are some ways:

- **Consider writing a feature article.** We all have stories about our journeys, spiritual and otherwise. They inspire us and help us to better know each other when we share them in writing. You don't have to be a great writer. I am a pretty good editor, and I enjoy helping writers refine their message.
- **Be a reporter.** When you participate in an activity that would be of interest to the congregation, send a brief description to the newsletter.
- **Take pictures.** There is truth in the saying that a picture is worth a thousand words.

- **Promote your initiatives.** I am speaking now to ministry teams and Board members engaged in actions on behalf of the Fellowship. When you need to provide more information than brief reminders in the weekly blast, use the newsletter. And be sure to share your good news!

Keep in mind that the newsletter is a publicly available document posted on our website, while the weekly reminders blast goes only to members and friends who have been entered into our church management database. So when you send information to newsletter@uufw.org, personal contact information, i.e., email addresses and phone numbers, will not be published.

A final thought: When one of our members makes the time and effort to write a feature article, if you liked it, please let them know.

Summer Highlights

July 31: Attendance at UUFW services always falls off during the summer months, but not on the last Sunday in July. That was when the Worship Arts team presented to a full house, the video produced by Bill Berry of the building of our Fellowship Hall in 1988. Our building was designed by Bill, and the construction was mostly done by our members. If you missed it, [the video](#), it is still available on YouTube.

Fortunately, Bill and Bea Berry, who are both in frail condition, were able to attend the service, along with family members and many of the UUFW members who participated in the construction. It was truly a joyous occasion.



Bill was presented with a plaque of appreciation for his contributions to the Fellowship. It will hang in our foyer. Here he is surrounded by members of the original construction crew.

August 31: More than 10 UUFW members and friends attended a Climate Action rally to protest Gov. Youngkin's effort to remove Virginia from the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative \(RGGI\)](#). A group of about 40 protestors representing different organizations held signs, made noise and listened to people talk about the many ways RGGI is helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. The rally was held at the Harrisonburg Office of the VA DEQ, which was presented with a letter urging agency support for the RGGI.

